

MISSISSIPPI WIRELESS COMMUNICATION COMMISSION

February 5, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Place: MDOT Auditorium

Commission Members Present:

**MS Department of Corrections
MS Emergency Management Agency
MS Highway Safety Patrol
MS National Guard
MS Association of Supervisors
MS Department of Environmental Quality
MS Department of Transportation
MS Association of Fire Chiefs
MS Office of Homeland Security
MS Department of Information Technology Services
MS Department of Health
MS Municipal League
MS Department of Public Safety**

**Chris Epps
Mike Womack
Michael Berthay
Gary Ladd
Steve Gray
Keith Harkins
Willie Huff
Tom Lariviere
Jay Ledbetter
David Litchliter
Mike Lucius
Quincy Mukoro
Stephen Simpson**

Advisory Members Present:

Chairman Epps called the meeting to order at 1:40 PM and welcomed everyone.

Chairman Epps called for a motion to approve the minutes of the January 2009 meeting with a noted correction in the name of the attendee for the MS Department of Health from Mike Lucius to Marc Wilson. Mike Lucius made the motion and it was seconded by Quincy Mukoro. The motion passed with none opposed.

Chairman Epps recognized Pamela Hemphill, UMMC Emergency Management Coordinator, to provide an update on the University Medical Center MED-COM Communications Center. *Mississippi MED-COM* is designed to function as a service to emergency response agencies, hospitals, and first responders in Mississippi. It is a state-of-the-art communications center which is staffed twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week with trained emergency management technicians, fire-fighters, and paramedics to take the calls. MED-COM also functions to provide assistance to the MS Department of Health and MEMA as requested during disasters or other state wide emergencies. MS Med-1, a 100 bed field hospital which can be used as a command center in times of emergencies is a component of *Mississippi MED-COM*. The front of each of the units is outfitted with communications equipment that ties into MED-COM and MED-COM is tied into the MSWIN System. She thanked the Wireless Communication Commission for being innovative and working with them to push the project forward. She also passed out invitations to their Open House scheduled for February 18, 2009, @ 9:00 AM.

Joel Yelverton, who has served as Chairman of the Procurement Review Committee is leaving the Commission. He was allotted time for comments and was presented a Distinguished Service Award on behalf of the Commission and the Advisory Board.

Chairman Epps notified the Commission of the following committee appointments and assignments: Mr. Keith Harkins, Deputy Administrator at the MS Department of Environmental Quality, will serve as the new Procurement Review Committee Chairman; Sheriff Tim Perkins, President of MS Sheriff's Association, will join the Procurement Review Committee; Mr. Steve Gray will now be representing the MS Association of Supervisors on the Commission.

Chairman Epps recognized Keith Harkins to report for the Procurement Review Committee. Mr. Harkins reported that there were no requests. Therefore, the Committee has no report at this time.

Willie Huff reported for the Governance/Interoperability Committee and shared that there have been six (6) meetings held across the state to discuss the Public Safety Interoperability Communications (PSIC) Grant. Participants were given grant packages and instructed on the application process. Attendance at the meetings greatly exceeded the numbers registered and expected.

Of greatest concern to those attending the PSIC meetings was the recurring fees. They were encouraged to contact their legislators to get them to fund the operations and maintenance fees. The meetings were productive. Locals are now in the process of determining the agencies that they wish to interoperate with and will then submit a letter to the WCC staff expressing their interest to participate in an interoperability assessment. A schedule will be set for WCC staff to visit with them to evaluate their current communications infrastructure and needed upgrades for interoperability. A grant application will then be drawn up and submitted to the Interoperability committee for consideration.

Chief Huff asked for a status of our Bond Bill. Chairman Epps reported that Chairman Ellis has drafted the bill and wants to meet with him this afternoon (Feb 5, 2009) or Friday (Feb 6, 2009). Jay Ledbetter informed the commission that the \$10M in bond funding should be available to us in the next two weeks or if not, a loan from that bond should be available. Vice-Chairman Womack noted that of the two \$20M grants, the first \$20M is expected to be available in the next two weeks. We will continue to push for the 2nd \$20M grant by getting the application process started.

Chief Huff also brought the proposed contract with Gulf States Regional Center for Public Safety Innovations before the commission. A copy of the proposed agreement had been reviewed by commission members and the Commission attorney. Chief Huff made the motion to execute the contract and it was seconded by Colonel Gary Ladd. The motion passed with none opposed.

Chairman Epps congratulated Bill Roach on his permanent appointment as Executive Officer of the Wireless Communication Commission. The Personnel Committee made his interim appointment permanent last month.

The Project Update was presented by Bill Roach.

Phase I – 44 Sites		Phase II – 52 Sites		Phase III – 47 Sites	
Towers:					
Built	29	SCIPS Complete	52	SCIPS Complete	11
In Wide Area Trunking	18	Due Diligence Commenced	23	Sites Under Investigation	36
In Construction	3	Securing Land Lease	29		

Phase 1A is in Wide Area Trunking; Phase 1B (East) will be in Wide Area Trunking by 4/30/09; Phase 1C (West) will be in Wide Area Trunking by 5/15/09; and the whole system Phase 1 will be up and operational by June 30, 2009.

In Phase 2A (13 sites), which is the two paths and a loop around the Jackson Metropolitan Area, site development will be complete around the first of May and that system will be in Wide Area Trunking June 25th. At that point, you can leave Jackson and drive to the coast with continuous coverage. Phase 2 will be operational on July 28th. That will be after all coverage testing is complete and other site testing is complete.

Vice-Chairman Womack noted that he had been in touch with an Emergency Management Director in regard to the Demonstration Project – Panola County Bridging System, and they are pleased with their solution. Mr. Roach emphasized that during the PSIC Grant Meetings throughout the state, it was being stressed that we are not about selling radio systems. We are looking for economical solutions to provide interoperability with the MSWIN System.

Mr. Litchliter provided a report on the monthly expenditures. Having received approval to repay the DPS Sub-Grant \$982,000.00, the bond funding was decreased by that amount. The report indicated a balance of \$3.3M. We are currently holding invoices totaling \$3.5 Million and are anxiously awaiting additional funding.

Mr. Roach noted that in Phase 2, eight (8) co-location sites did not meet the standards so we have a change order budgetary quotation for \$4.2M to build eight sites and provide three (3) equipment shelters as well as the services and equipment to do that. Due to two previous change orders, we had a net credit of a little over \$5M. This change order brings us back to \$1M less than the original contract and still leaves us under budget. Chief Lariviere made the motion to approve and it was seconded by Chief Huff. The motion passed with none opposed.

Mr. Litchliter informed the Commission of an Emergency Purchase which the WCC made in preparation for Hurricane Gustav. The amount of the purchase was \$16,207.50.

The next item before the Commission was a discussion of whether Commission members can vote on issues via email. Attorney Mark Garriga noted that all deliberations must be taken in open forum, prior to an email vote. The reason for the email vote must be to register the vote and the vote must be recorded in the following Commission meeting minutes with details of who voted and how. Several questions followed which Attorney Garriga will research and answer later. Chairman Epps suggested that he spend no more time on the issue and that all members should plan on being at the meetings.

There was no other business to be discussed.

The next meeting will be March 5, 2009, in the MDOT Auditorium at 1:30 PM.

Tom Lariviere made a motion to adjourn and Chief Huff seconded the motion. The motion passed with none opposed.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 2:40 PM.